

*SUBMISSION TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE. (JUNE 2014)*

RE REDRESS SCHEME FOR SURVIVORS OF ORPHANAGES & CHILDRENS HOMES IN AUSTRALIA.

*Suggestions for a Redress scheme:*

Health & Housing issues are 2 of the biggest challenges facing Forgotten Australian Survivors today.

## **HEALTH**

I believe the Federal Government should provide efficient and ongoing Medical Dental & Counselling to all survivors raised in Orphanages, Children's Homes & Foster Care across Australia during the last century.

I would like to see this implemented in the form of a Health Card that would provide free access to medical, dental & counselling care as well as public transport, and other forms of transport used to help obtain and gain access to these health services.

I believe that the Government had a duty of care to provide adequate medical and dental care to these children who were in their so called "care" but failed to do so. However gave permission for many children to be used as guinea pigs in medical experiments and drug trials including experimentation with De Provera, Vaccinations, Skin Grafting, Invasive procedures involving the genitals and Electric Shock Treatment and in addition children were used for unpaid child labour in laundries and on farms while those who ran these Institutions were paid for their work.

Many Forgotten Australians are still suffering the effects of this horrific torture and abuse inflicted on them while in these Institutions & Foster Care, and as a result of this abuse it has permanently left the majority of Forgotten Australian Survivors, physically, mentally, emotionally and/or psychologically challenged on a day to day basis.

## **HOUSING**

Once these survivors reached a certain age, they were kicked out of the institution, straight onto the street, they were given no opportunities or a place to stay, most had no coping skills to deal with an outside world that was completely foreign to them after spending most or all of their childhoods subjected to the institutional conditions. And many are still living in extreme poverty today, many are living in rooming houses, bedsits, caravans, cars, and on the streets, many have never been able to establish any security.

Services are desperately required to provide assistance with housing and accommodation for survivors. With an individual category for forgotten Australian survivors, one that is of the highest priority, this should be part of the Governments way of providing reparation for the homelessness, poverty and appalling conditions that many Forgotten Australians are still dealing with today.

The effects of the conditions that these children were raised in left them ill prepared and ill-equipped to survive in the outside world & desperately need assistance in these areas urgently.

## **AGE CARE**

Many Forgotten Australians are terrified of returning to institutional care in their old age. Childhood & Old age is when we are at our most vulnerable. The thought of going back into an institution is the last place we want to spend our last days.

Many have not been able to sustain family ties or relationships due to not being able to bond with their own families as children, leaving them in their old age as they were in their childhood, with no-one to speak out on their behalf if they were to be mistreated.

So I would ask that they are allowed to remain in their own home for as long as possible depending on health needs & be provided with Specialised Care visiting on a daily basis. Which would also include delivering medication, Showering if required, Meals on Wheels if required, and a system set up to help pay their bills. A check on the living conditions and that they meet the required standards of Health & Safety. And someone to visit them to take them on an outing even if it is just down to sit in the park or go and have a meal or coffee out in public so they don't feel that they are pent up in one place and all alone.

## **REDRESS/COMPENSATION**

I believe all Forgotten Australians that spent time as children in institutions or Foster Care should be entitled to Redress/Compensation for the crimes against them by a system that was ran by adults that should have known better that worked for a Government that should have regulated these institutions and ensured children in their care were actually provided with that care.

This could be implemented through a special scheme set up where these victims/survivors must be given the opportunity to tell of their experiences of abuse and torture and the impact it has had or the impact it is still having on them today. This would include:

1. A National Register being set up where all victims/survivors can register.
2. All past providers to contribute to a National Fund for the Victims/Survivors of Orphanages/Children's Homes & Foster Care.
3. Set up an Information Hot Line with dedicated phone number.
4. Advertise this information in all public Media outlets every 3 months for at least the next 5 years.

# A Health Card for Medical & Dental Care for all Forgotten Australians.

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Petition by

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We the Forgotten Australian survivors call on the Federal Government to provide efficient and on going Medical Dental & Counselling to all survivors raised in Orphanages Childrens Homes & Foster Care across Australia during the last century. We would like to see this implemented in the form of a Health Card similar to the Gold Card that the War Veterans have acquired. This will not only cover Health Dental & Counselling, but will also include public transport, and other forms of transport used to help obtain and gain access to Health Care.

For a high percentage of survivors of these orphanages and childrens homes the quality of life is very poor. Many are living in rooming houses, bedsits, caravans, cars, and on the streets due to being thrown out of the institutions once they reached a certain age. Many had no coping skills to cope with an outside world that was completely foreign to them after spending most or all of their childhoods in these institutions. The Government had a duty of care to provide adequate medical and dental care to these children who were in their so called "care" but failed to do so. But yet gave permission for many of these children to be used as guinea pigs in medical experiments, including drug, vaccinations and electric shock treatment. Children were also used as unpaid child labour in laundries and on farms while those who ran these Institutions were paid for their work.

Many Forgotten Australians are still suffering the effects of horrific torture and abuse inflicted on them while in these Institutions & Foster Care, and as a result of this abuse it has permanently left the majority of Forgotten Australian Survivors, physically, mentally, emotionally and/or psychologically challenged on a day to day basis. We cannot change the past but those responsible or those who have inherited the power from those responsible can help right the wrongs of the past and give back to those who suffered so much, some respect & dignity and much needed compassion and understanding.

<https://www.change.org/en-AU/petitions/australian-federal-government-a-health-card-for-medical-dental-care-for-all-forgotten-australians>